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AMENDMENT TO THE SPECIFICATION

On page 1, lines 10-16, please amend the paragraph as shown below:

This application is a divisional application of U.S. Patent application no. 09/760,500, filed January 12, 2001 (now U.S. Patent No. 6,767,702) which claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional application no. 60/176,409, filed January 13, 2000 and is a continuation-in-part of U.S. Patent application no. 09/603,830, filed June 26, 2000 (now U.S. Patent No. 6,506,564) which claims the benefit of U.S. provisional application no. 60/200,161, filed April 26, 2000 and is a continuation-in-part of pending U.S. Patent application number No. 09/344,667, filed June 25, 1999 (now U.S. Patent no. 6,361,944), which was a continuation-in-part of pending U.S. Patent application number no. 09/240,755, filed January 29, 1999 (abandoned), which was a continuation-in-part of pending PCT application PCT/US97/12783, which was filed July 21, 1997 and claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional no. 60/031,809, filed July 29, 1996, which are incorporated by reference. Benefit of provisional applications nos. 60/031,809, filed July 29, 1996; 60/200,161, filed April 26, 2000; 60/176,409, filed January 13, 2000 is also claimed, the disclosures are incorporated by reference.

Please amend the paragraph in the specification at page 157, line 25 to page 158, line 7, as follows:

Solid DTT was added to 600 μ L solutions of the different types of thiol- or disulfide DNA modified 30 nm gold nanoparticle colloids until the DTT concentration was 0.017M. As DTT displaces the oligonucleotides, the color of the colloid turns from red to blue. UV/VIS spectra were taken as a function of time. The absorbance at ~528nm associated with dispersed 30nm gold particles began to decrease and a broad band at 700nm began to grow. The band at 700 nm is associated with colloid aggregation. As shown in Figure 48, single Single thiol oligonucleotide (1)-modified 30 nm gold particles quickly form an aggregate in 0.017M DTT; after 1.5 hours, the colloid totally turns blue. The solution containing disulfide oligonucleotide (4)-modified nanoparticles turns blue after 20 hours under identical conditions. For the trithiol-oligonucleotide (cleaved 6) modified nanoparticles, it took 40 h to turn the solution blue.